

IN HONOR OF GENEVIEVE
KRUEGER, RECIPIENT OF THE
2002 MCGROARTY POETRY AWARD

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 16, 2002

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Genevieve Krueger, who will receive the 2002 McGroarty Poetry Award at the Shouting Coyote Poetry Festival on April 20, 2002 at Verdugo Hills High School in Sunland Tujunga, in California's 27th Congressional District. Each year, this award is given to an individual who demonstrates extraordinary community service and tireless efforts toward the advancement of the literary arts.

Twenty-four years ago, Ms. Krueger began an out-of-print book search business. She knew that her love of reading and literature would serve her customers well as she searched the country for great works of art no longer in print. In doing so, she set herself out as a devotee of the process of good writing and the need to share that writing with the world. She is also an avid book collector, with a personal collection of more than 15,000 volumes, and volunteers her time with the Friends of the Library.

In 1984, she befriended a group enrolled in a poetry workshop at the McGroarty Arts Center in Sunland Tujunga, California. The class disbanded after several sessions, and, recognizing the need for writer collaboration, Ms. Krueger invited the group to her home. What began as a workshop became a weekly writers group and for sixteen years now, writers have been welcome at Ms. Krueger's home to share their thoughts and their work.

The group named themselves the Chuparosa Writers after the private home, Rancho Chupa Rosa, of California Poet Laureate, Congressman, dramatist, Los Angeles Times columnist, and historian John Steven McGroarty (1862–1944) and his wife Ida. Today, the private home is the McGroarty Arts Center and the annual McGroarty Poetry Award honors the legacy of John Steven McGroarty, a legacy that lives on in the work of the Chuparosa Writers and of Genevieve Krueger.

The Chuparosa Writers meet each Wednesday to share their work and foster the works of an ever-changing group of writers and poetry lovers. They have helped sponsor poetry contests for elementary schools, performed numerous poetry readings as individuals and as a group, taught poetry classes to schoolchildren, assisted in creating the Poet Laureate position for Sunland Tujunga and supported countless community endeavors.

Ms. Krueger eloquently states the purpose of the group: "We meet to share new discoveries, and work-in-progress. Through our meetings we stimulate new ideas and growth, and we hope to spread the message that writing is an important and enriching activity." For her commitment to bringing the arts to a wider audience, to the literary tradition of the foothills and to new discoveries, I ask all Members of Congress to join me in congratulating Genevieve Krueger upon receiving the 2002 McGroarty Poetry Award.

BLACK LUNG BENEFITS
SURVIVORS EQUITY ACT

HON. NICK J. RAHALL II

OF WEST VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 16, 2002

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing legislation aimed at providing equity in the treatment of benefits for eligible survivors of recipients of black lung benefits. Joining me in introducing this measure is the ranking Democrat on the Committee on Education and Workforce, GEORGE MILLER of California, and the gentleman from Pennsylvania, JOHN MURTHA.

By way of background, in 1981 the Black Lung Benefits Act was amended in several respects at the urging of the Reagan Administration. The driving motivation for this legislation at the time was to shore up the finances of the Black Lung Disability Trust Fund through which benefit payments are made to beneficiaries where mine employment terminated prior to 1970, or where no mine operator can be assigned liability.

After the enactment of this legislation, administrative actions and a number of extremely harmful court decisions made it extremely difficult, if not almost impossible, for those suffering from the crippling disease of black lung to qualify for benefits. However, today, a large number of the problems claimants faced have been remedied by a Clinton Administration rulemaking that was finalized on December 20, 2000.

Yet, two provisions of the 1981 Act in particular continue to be most troublesome, and largely impact, in a very adverse way, surviving widows of coal miners who die as a result of black lung disease.

As it now stands, due to the 1981 amendments, there is a dual and inequitable standard governing how benefits are handled for surviving spouses of deceased beneficiaries. In the event a beneficiary died prior to January 1, 1982—the effective date of the 1981 Act—benefits continued uninterrupted to the surviving spouse. However, if the beneficiary dies after January 1, 1982, the surviving spouse must file a new claim in order to try to continue receiving the benefits and must prove that the miner died as a result of black lung disease despite the fact that the miner was already deemed eligible to receive benefits prior to death. This is illogical, unfair and outlandish.

In addition, as a result of the 1981 law, there is also a dual and inequitable standard governing the basis by which a miner or his widow is entitled to benefits under the Act. For pre-1981 Act claimants, a rebuttable presumption of the existence of black lung disease is established if the miner worked for 15 years or more in underground coal mines and if over evidence, such as an X-ray, demonstrates the existence of a total disability respiratory or pulmonary impairment. This rebuttable presumption, however, does not apply to post-1981 Act claimants.

The legislation I am introducing today removes the requirement that a surviving spouse must refile a claim in order to continue receiving benefits. It also applies the rebuttable presumption of black lung disease for pre-1981 Act claimants to those filed after the effective date of that statute.

This is a fair and just proposal, and one which should have been enacted years ago. In fact, I have introduced various black lung bills since 1988. During the early 1990s the House of Representatives on two occasions passed reform legislation. Much of what was contained in these comprehensive reform bills was finally addressed by the Clinton-era rulemaking. However, the subject matter of the bill I am introducing today demands action by the Congress. I urge the leadership of this body to consider this matter, and to allow this bill to be acted upon this year.

IN RECOGNITION OF JAMES E.
ROBINSON

HON. ELIOT L. ENGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 16, 2002

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, the future of our country is indeed our children and a man being honored tonight, James E. Robinson, is someone who believes that helping them is the highest calling. James Robinson is a founder of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Youth Adults Club. In that capacity for the past 11 years he has worked with and inspired more than 500 young people.

Mr. Robinson also served as the Head Coach for baseball and junior varsity basketball at the Alexander Hamilton High School in Elmsford while also serving as Assistant Varsity Basketball Coach there. He has also worked with the young people Mercy College while serving as Assistant Men's Basketball Coach.

But his community service is not limited to coaching our youth. He has served on numerous committees including the United Way Youth Advisory Council, the Westchester Community College Advisory Council, the Annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Breakfast Committee, and the African American Men of Westchester where he is chair of the Youth Committee.

Mr. Robinson is also co-founder and President of Fathers and Children Together (FACT), an organization of more than 70 fathers from nine different locales in Westchester.

He lives in Greenburgh with his wife, Yolanda, and their three children, Nicole, 8, and twins Jasmine and James, Jr. 6. He is someone whose gifts will keep giving to the community for many generations. For every child he helps will certainly go on to help others of their own generation and the next. We can truly say that he has made his community a better place, and for this we are all grateful.

TRIBUTE TO THE REV. DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. ON THE ANNIVERSARY OF HIS DEATH BY ALBERT CAREY CASWELL

HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 16, 2002

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I invite my colleagues to join me in paying tribute to the memory of the late Reverend Martin Luther